ABSTRACT

_Huaben_ fictions emerged under the influence of the flourishing storytelling trade during the fourteenth century China cities. The Song and Yuan _huaben_ fictions, saw a revolutionary portrayal of a large array of city dwellers. Through the storytellers' perspective insights, lifestyles, aspirations and value judgements of the urban inhabitants are largely reflected.

The dynamic socio-economic development in the cities, reaching its peak in the Song dynasty, sparked off the awakening of the townsfolk's consciousness as human beings with feelings and desires. Germinating attitudes started to challenge the perpetual reign of feudalism. Pieces depicting unconventional women, who are seemingly not fettered by traditions in behaviors and not manipulated within conventional boundaries in thoughts are certainly distinctive, significantly reflective of the evolving skeptical views on the feudalistic traditions, especially those restricting women's freedom.

Hence, this academic exercise aims to focus on exploring the spiritual outlooks and life pursuits of these female characters. By providing an insight into their inner world and analyzing the ideology initiating their courage to take exception to conventional values, it is with hope that the reader will be able to acquire the perspectives of these women as awakened women. Through the comparison of these non-conforming women with similar female characters of different times, the characteristic traits of their courage are highlighted.

The findings of this research show that the ideological value of these women's courage has been underrated. The fundamental elements of their non-
complying ways, namely the yearning for complete individuality, intact dignity, and freedom in love and marriage, are indeed the essentials of human awakening during that era. Therefore, they are not merely the literary icons of awakened women, but the epitomes of awakened humans as well.

This study also proves that the authors, by illustrating women defying against oppressive traditions in their dedications to attain life happiness, advocates that their pursuits should not be restrained by their social status as the "second sex". As opposed to conventional positions, this undoubtedly displays the emergence of a new perspective of women, marking the initial stage of their liberation, and is indeed the repercussion of human awakening.